

AMR ADVENTURES CAMPER PACKET - 2010

Lutherans Outdoors in South Dakota

Dear Parents,

A great adventure awaits your teenager at camp this summer. We have recruited committed Christian staff, set up a great menu, prepared our summer Bible study theme, and planned our programs to be fun-filled and meaningful. With the choices of the group, we will plan a unique camping adventure to challenge the youth. It is our goal to help campers develop as leaders spiritually, socially, and physically.

You should receive a **health form** from the group advisor for you to sign and send with your child to camp. The campers do not need a doctor's examination, but we need to know if there are any health concerns.

Lutherans Outdoors in South Dakota carries a **minimal insurance policy** for accidents and illness incurred at camp. The camper's insurance will be the primary coverage. If we must take someone to the doctor for treatment, the clinic will first file a claim with the camper's insurance. If there is no insurance, or if the camper's policy will not pay for this accident or illness, our insurance will cover the costs up to \$2,000 for an accident and \$200 for an illness. Personal property is not covered by camp insurance and any claims for loss, theft, etc., will need to be submitted to your personal homeowner's/ renter's insurance company.

Your child will not have direct access to a telephone while at camp. **In case of emergency, you should call Atlantic Mountain Ranch at 605/673-3017 or 673-3435 or call Outlaw Ranch at 605/673-4040.** Our staff will get the message to your child as soon as possible. Each day, the group may not receive messages until they are back in camp from their daily adventure. Please do not send a cell phone with your child. This detracts from focusing on the activities at hand and building relationships with others in the group.

When your child packs for camp, be sure the enclosed checklist is followed. We also want you to know that each week we take an offering at camp. This year the offerings will go toward the Lutherans Outdoors Campership Fund to ensure truly everyone is able to attend camp. We are also collecting food and toiletries for the food pantry and women's shelter in Custer if you would like to contribute.

We're excited about the adventure your son or daughter will be experiencing. Please call for answers to specific questions, and pray for our ministry that the good news of Christ might be shared by all!

Sincerely,

Molly Sasser-Goehner, Director
Outlaw Ranch & Atlantic Mountain Ranch

Dear Camper,

Hello from South Dakota. **We are eagerly awaiting your arrival this summer.** For a week you are going to be part of a Great Adventure that will allow you to learn about God, yourself, and your group in new and awesome ways. Your feet will carry you where you need to go, your eyes and ears will make memories for you, and your lungs will allow you to laugh, sing, and play. We will be living, traveling, and working together, helping each other out when needed. The Adventure is waiting for you!

Adventures are always fun when you are prepared. It is time to get ready for an exciting and fun week. We have sent a packet of information to help you get ready for your time with us. Please read and follow it, so when you arrive we can have a great Adventure together!

See you soon,
Mary Stutz, AMR Site Director



Camp address: Atlantic Mountain Ranch, 11760 Custer Limestone Rd., Custer, SD 57730

Phone: summer only - 605/673-3017 or 673-3435 (an answering machine will take calls if no one is available).

AMR ADVENTURES

Native Americans called the Black Hills the *Paha Sapa*, the Hills of Black, or the Holy Place. Some Native Americans claim that they never stayed overnight in the Hills because of this. Others dispute this, but all call it a special place. Once you have been out here, we hope that you, too, will discover the sacredness of the Black Hills.

The Hills are really smaller mountains. Atlantic Mountain Ranch is at an elevation of just over one mile high. This is high for most of you who will journey to be with us for a week of camping. It takes a day to adjust to the altitude. Walking at your regular pace you will breathe deeper, become tired more quickly, and perhaps feel a little light-headed at times when you are pushing yourself. Don't worry about this. Within a day you'll be OK!

The Black Hills have a very special quality to those of us who live in them year-round. Many claim that there is a special energy that comes from the Hills. Jesus talked often about going to the hills to be renewed. In the quiet of the hills, with wildlife moving through the meadows and forests, as the wind whispers through the pines, you will begin to sense more of the rhythms of the weather and connect with the rhythms of your own life. Hopefully, you will begin to see the connectedness of all life.

We have selected ten adventurous activities from which your group can choose (see below). Some of the activities will not take the full day. That is intentional. Some of your time will be spent at Atlantic Mountain Ranch. Worship, Bible study, campfires, games, and mealtime chores of cooking and clean-up are integral to each of our days. We will not want to rush these community times together. You will be involved in each of these key times during the day as a listener, participant, and leader.

Your group will live at "The Outpost" area of Atlantic Mountain Ranch. The site has cabins with bunks, outhouses, and sinks with hot and cold water. You will use flashlights and lanterns instead of the modern convenience of electricity. The modern bathhouse with showers is 1/4 mile away. Most meals during the week will be cooked over a fire by group members. A few meals will be served in the dining hall. The experience will be that of a simple lifestyle -- getting back to the basics, developing a team with your group, and having the adventure of a lifetime!

The Ten Options

Your group leader has more detailed information on all these activities.

- #1** Mountain biking on the Mickelson Trail (bike trail) or on backcountry roads and trails.
- #2** Backpacking for two to four days in the Black Hills.
- #3** Fly fishing in area lakes or streams (if over age 16 you must purchase a fishing license).
- #4** Jewel Cave National Monument: spelunking (must be age 16) or lantern tour (any age) (extra fee for cave tour).
- #5** Day hike with swimming in an area lake as an option.
- #6** Servant Project: Forest Service trail maintenance, home construction/renovation projects, or helping out senior citizens in the Custer area.
- #7** Low ropes challenge course and horseback riding at Atlantic Mountain Ranch.
- #8** Rock climbing in the Black Hills (extra fee).
- #9** Geocaching: Use GPS units to find your way through the woods to a hidden "cache."
- #10** Kayaking: Try out both lake and river kayaking (extra fee).

THOUGHTS BEFORE CAMPING IN THE BLACK HILLS

As you are thinking about what to bring, a description of possible weather conditions will be helpful. The key thing to keep in mind is the elevation and the weather extremes that will accompany it. Elevations will range from 5,000 to 7,000 feet above sea level. In the summer in the Black Hills, one may encounter frost, rain, hail, and snow as well as 85-90 degree days.

In outdoor conditions, staying dry is extremely important. Rain gear is an absolute must! It is also important to keep warm. The best way to stay warm and dry in adverse conditions is to pack clothes that can be layered (see equipment list). A big, bulky jacket is not necessary.

SOME THOUGHTS ON FABRICS/ MATERIALS FOR CLOTHING:

- Cotton:** Absorbs lots of water, dries slowly and loses most of its insulating value when wet.
- Wool:** Less absorbent than cotton, dries quicker. Keeps you warm even when wet.
- Polypropylene:** A lightweight synthetic fiber that is non-absorbent, can be shaken nearly dry. A very good fabric for inner wear. (often called "polypro")
- Nylon:** Lightweight, good wind protection. If waterproof, good rain protection. Dries quickly. Very good outer layer.
- Down:** Lightweight and packable, but nearly worthless if it gets wet; very difficult to get dry.
- Fleece:** Lightweight, non-absorbent. An excellent insulating layer. Dries quickly.

FOOTWEAR

Your feet are your "sole" means of transportation. The boots you wear for hiking or backpacking are very important. This does not necessarily mean buying a new pair of boots because new boots can cause blisters and be very hard on your feet. If buying a new pair, consider some of the lightweight hiking boots on the market. They are easier to break in and are usually easier on your feet than the all-leather type. Make sure your hiking boots provide ankle support. Running shoes provide no ankle support. Buy new boots at least two weeks in advance of your trip. Make sure your boots, whether new or used, are well-broken-in to your feet.

Good socks are as important as good shoes. Socks can help prevent blisters as well as keep your feet warm. Wearing two pairs of socks in hiking boots usually helps prevent blisters. We recommend a thin pair of synthetic socks underneath a pair of wool or medium to heavy hiking socks.

YOUR MOUNTAIN BED

Keep in mind that the mercury may dip down to freezing at night, so a warm sleeping bag is important. Synthetic bags will keep you warm if wet. The camp will provide foam sleeping pads if you will be backpacking or camping out and sleeping on the ground. A waterproof stuff sack for your bag is handy if you will be backpacking.

OUTFITTING

The camp will provide the following equipment, which varies depending on the activities your group chooses: tent, backpack, bicycles, cooking gear, food, tarp, water purification equipment, water bottles, shovel and TP, stoves and fuel, ropes, map and compass, first aid kit, experience, organization and fun! You provide the items on the "Equipment List" page and any specific equipment for the activities chosen by your group.

HYDRATION

As you come to higher elevations, you need to drink more water to help your body adjust to the elevation. For two or three days prior to coming to camp, drink lots of water. This will help prevent altitude sickness. It is better to drink only water or lemonade, not caffeine, on the trip. You will feel much better on your adventures if you drink plenty of water.

EQUIPMENT LIST

These are items you must bring for your week of *AMR Adventures*:

- _____ Sleeping bag rated at 30 degrees Fahrenheit
- _____ Rain gear (poncho or rain coat and pants) – **A MUST!!**
- _____ Two pair of shoes/boots depending on your chosen activities (hiking boots for backpacking and hiking, work boots for servant projects, boots with 1/2" heel for horseback riding, other shoes for around camp)
- _____ 2 pair long pants (work pants or jeans; loose-fitting for hiking, working, biking)
- _____ 5-6 pair heavy socks (Need both wool/heavy socks and thinner cotton/polypro socks for long hikes and backpacking)
- _____ 1-2 pair shorts
- _____ 4 T-shirts (no tank tops – chance of sunburn)
- _____ 1 long-sleeve shirt
- _____ Sweatshirt or windbreaker with a hood
- _____ Wool sweater or polar fleece layer
- _____ Underwear
- _____ Bandanas (optional)
- _____ Hat/cap to shield face from sun
- _____ Gloves/knit hat for warmth
- _____ Flashlight
- _____ Pen/pencil and paper
- _____ Bible
- _____ Day backpack (school bookbag size)
- _____ Towel/washcloth
- _____ Clothes for your group's van trip
- _____ Health form filled out and signed

Additional Items:

For Backpacking

- Broken-in hiking boots

For Caving (Spelunking)

- Old clothes (long pants & long-sleeve shirt/jacket)
- Ankle-high lug sole boots

For Servant Project

- Work clothes
- Boots or sturdy shoes

For Day Hike/Swimming

- Swimsuit/towel if swimming

For Rock Climbing

- Loose-fitting clothing

For Kayaking:

- Swimsuit/towel
- Shoes, shirt, short to get wet
- Fleece shirt or jacket

Toiletries:

- | | |
|---|--|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> _____ Toothbrush/toothpaste _____ Soap _____ Sunscreen _____ Insect repellent _____ Lip protection/balm | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> _____ Brush/comb _____ Deodorant _____ Lotion _____ Feminine hygiene supplies _____ Medicines (Please bring prescriptions in the original bottle with the doctor's directions on the label.) |
|---|--|

Optional items: Money for camp t-shirt/sweatshirt or snacks, sunglasses, long underwear, hacky sack, frisbee, deck of cards, book, binoculars, camera.

Please do not bring: junk food, electronic devices (i.e., MP3 players, I-Pods), cell phones, pets, tons of toiletries, clothing with inappropriate slogans or logos, knives, fireworks, weapons, illegal substances (alcohol, drugs, tobacco products), or other unnecessary or dangerous items.

HYDRATION: Please drink lots of water for two to three days prior to coming to camp. This will help prevent altitude sickness. Avoid caffeine and pop on the trip out to camp.

FITNESS

The adventure you are about to embark on will be rewarding and fun, but it will also be physically challenging and should not be taken lightly. One must be as physically prepared as possible to enjoy the adventure experience to its fullest!

The best kind of “fitness” is endurance fitness: the ability to do prolonged work without fatigue. It has to do with the body’s overall health – the health of the heart, the lungs, the entire cardiovascular system and the other organs, as well as the muscles. The key to the whole thing is oxygen.

In simple terms, any activity – breathing, digesting, even the beating of the heart – requires energy. The body produces this energy by burning foodstuffs, and the burning agent is oxygen. The body can store food at each meal, using what it wants and saving some of the rest for later, but it can’t store oxygen. The key, then, is to get enough oxygen and to carry it in the blood to all areas of the body. The oxygen and food can then combine and produce energy as needed.

Most of us can produce enough energy to perform ordinary daily activities. As the activities become more vigorous, (i.e. hiking mountains, biking, caving) however, some of us can’t keep up. This is because, in some bodies, the means for the delivery of oxygen is limited. And remember, this week you will be at a higher altitude where there is less oxygen in the air.

Therefore, what you need to do to prepare your body for this kind of trip is to engage in the kind of exercise that demands oxygen and forces your body to process and deliver it. These types of exercises are called “aerobic” (with oxygen) exercises. Aerobic exercises include running, walking, swimming, cycling, aerobics, etc. Notice that isometrics, weight lifting and most calisthenics don’t make the list.

We want your adventure experience to be as enjoyable as possible! Besides, once you’ve made the commitment to a regular aerobic exercise program, you’ll know that you’re doing one of the nicest things possible for yourself – you’re strengthening your heart, keeping your body in shape, and improving your quality of life. You’ll have more stamina, a brighter outlook, and a sense of commitment and control over life that will enable you to handle life’s daily challenges.



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"... AND GOD CREATED THE HEAVENS AND THE EARTH ..."

Our *AMR Adventures* program makes use of public land in the Black Hills National Forest and in national and state park areas. The Black Hills experience allows us to use thousands of acres that have been set aside for special and careful use.

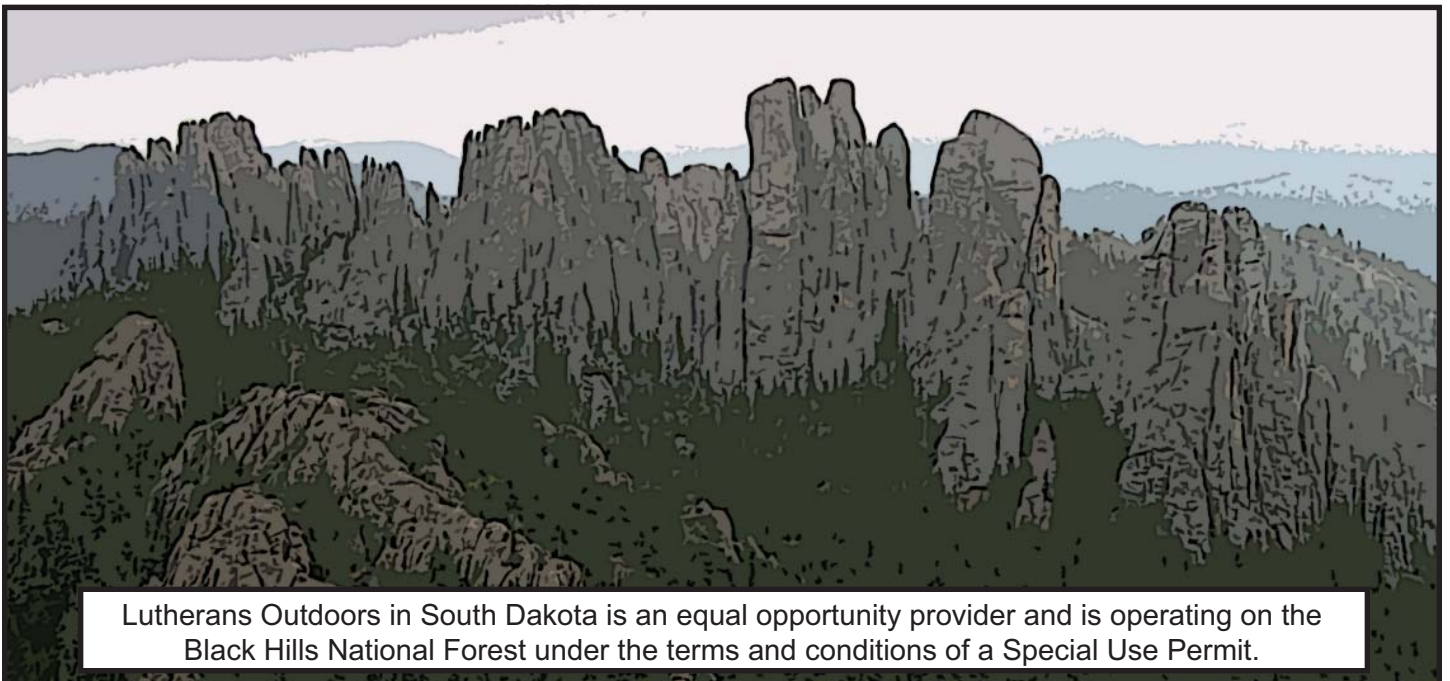
Caring for our surrounding environment is a PRIME concern. The visitor to these natural areas must understand the vulnerability of the plants, soils, waters and creatures within this land. A true voyager walks softly and strives not to leave a trace behind.

In years past we used to speak of wilderness survival as the ability of humans to survive the wilderness. Now we speak of wilderness survival as the land's ability to survive human impact. We all must help protect this valuable resource. We will attempt to avoid being a damaging intruder.

When using the forest, we will implement "low impact camping" techniques, including:

- leaving surface water (lakes, streams) uncontaminated by soap, toothpaste, food, and other waste. These are the only sources of water for drinking and cooking.
- staying on designated trails to avoid erosion and damage to the land.
- setting up camp in such a manner that we do not trample delicate vegetation.
- packing out everything we take in, plus other litter we encounter.
- when on backpack trips, using stoves instead of scarring the land with fires.
- leaving the setting as natural and undisturbed as possible.
- being respectful of others by keeping noise and disturbance to a minimum.

THESE PLACES, THESE GREAT FORESTS, THIS GRANDEUR WILL BE THERE FOR OUR GRANDCHILDREN TO ENJOY IN ITS NATURAL STATE ONLY IF WE ARE CAREFUL IN OUR USE OF IT NOW.



Lutherans Outdoors in South Dakota is an equal opportunity provider and is operating on the Black Hills National Forest under the terms and conditions of a Special Use Permit.



How to prepare you and your child for camp

Giving your child to the care of other people is perhaps the greatest act of trust you as a parent can give. We aim to do everything we can to earn and keep that trust; and, we know we cannot do this without your help. We want to partner with you to ensure your child/children will have the safest, most fun and faith-filled experience possible while at camp. Following are a few suggestions as you prepare your child for their week at camp:

- Talk about camp before you go. Ask questions together and discuss what camp might be like and what they might expect. Let them know what you will be doing when they are away. Help your child focus on making new friends and on being involved in camp activities.
- If your child has any special health, food allergies, or sleep related concerns, please share those with the camp staff so they can prepare for your child's arrival.
- Send a letter to your child before camp begins so a message from home will be awaiting his/her arrival. Ask specific questions about what they are doing and encourage them to write back. Send self-addressed stamped envelopes or postcards with your child so they can write home. While campers do not have the ability to use email while at camp, if you send an email to camp we will make sure and give it to your child when we hand out mail.
- For safety sake, we have a **“no cell phone” policy at camp**. Cell phones can be lost, stolen or used inappropriately with photos or calls to outsiders who could potentially put campers at risk. Regular use of cell phones/texting also tends to slow the formation of community and takes away from the learning and growth of being in an outdoor setting. For these reasons we ask you to **please leave cell phones at home**.
- Be prepared to talk about camp with your child upon their return home. This is important. The act of “processing” your child's experience helps them not only share with you what they did; it also serves to involve parents in the experience and helps the child reflect on how they have grown.
- If this is your child's first time away from family for an extended period of time and you feel they may become homesick, speak openly on the topic before your child leaves camp.
- Try brainstorming some positive coping strategies like talking to their camp counselor, writing letters, or drawing pictures of what they did that day. It is not always helpful to simply tell your child that you will come and get them (even phone calls prevent this opportunity for success). Overcoming homesickness can be a great achievement for your child. Rest assured, should your child get homesick while at camp—and we feel it would be helpful—we will contact you by phone. If this happens, please use this as an opportunity to build up your child and help them face this new experience.

Going away to camp is a wonderful growth experience for both campers and parents. Please let us know how we at camp can help YOUR child have the best week possible. **And here is the best tip yet...** pray for YOUR child while they are away at camp... and everyday for the rest of their lives!